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Sparks from
The Anvil of
Thought

Wm. Yancey Erwin

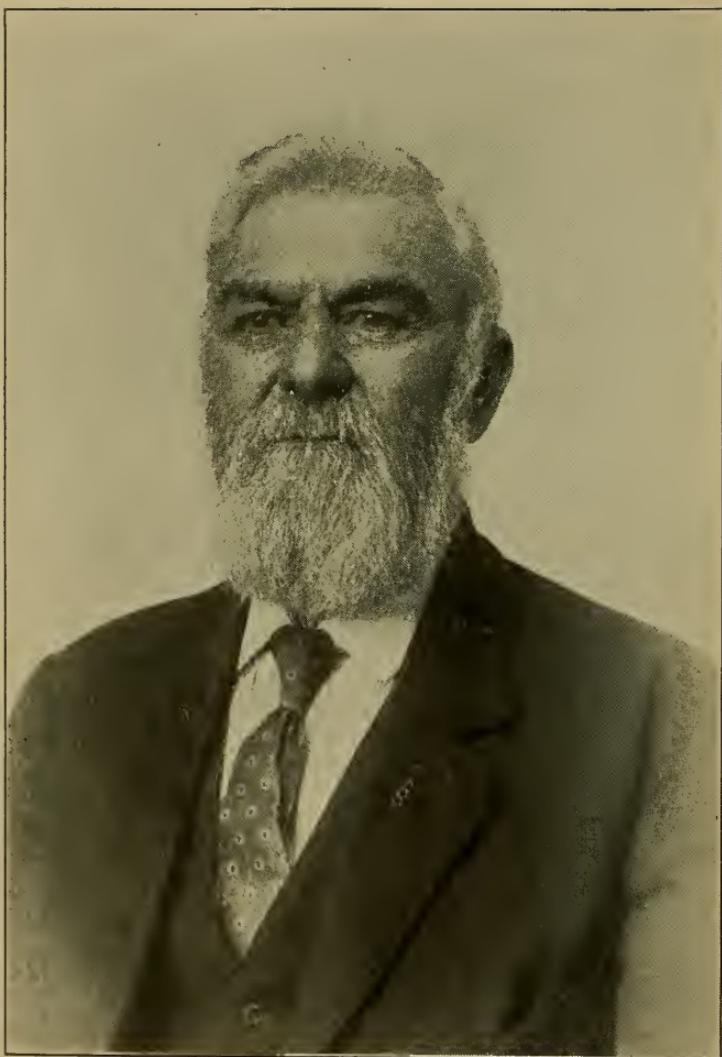


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The Author

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

By

WILLIAM YANCEY ERWIN

Author of

“Original Poems and Acrostics” and
“Wanetka and other Poems”

*As smiths strike on a welding heat
With heavy blows or light
The sparks begin to fly away
And metal to unite
So Poets with their subtle art
Oft heal again the broken heart.*

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CONTENTS

A Twilight Scene.....	28
A Sensible Bee.....	34
A Morning in May	79
A Model Hostess.....	88
A Winter Scene in Alabama.....	109
Be a Doctor.....	11
Bleeding Hearts.....	98
Baseball	99
Babylon	102
Caleb	16
Choristers	17
Christmas Eve	41
Christ, the Liberator.....	78
Diversity	93
Do Flowers Talk?.....	27
English Sparrows.....	35
Fear Not.....	106
Forgiven	37
Foragers	44
For the New Year.....	73
Flowers	105
For the Critics.....	120
Glad Tidings.....	32
Girls of Other Days.....	40
Glimpsing the Future.....	49
Grief	71
Introductory	5
If I Were King of Pain.....	77
Jingles and Jogs.....	29
John Sevier.....	50
James Whitcomb Riley.....	85
Kaiser Bill.....	110
Life's Autumn Days.....	75
Lookout Mountain.....	107
Life's Vintage	115
Modern Methods.....	46
My Mother's Prayer.....	38

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

Musical Maggie	36
My Mother.....	14
My Valentine	81
Mose and Dinah.....	59
Mountains	94
Nothing New	23
Nearing Port	82
No Night in Heaven.....	83
Orthographical Freaks.....	68
Ohio	74
Ode to the Four Winds.....	76
Prayer for Peace.....	71
Penitence	96
Perennial Youth	112
Pilot of My Soul.....	113
Prayer that Counts	100
Postalitis	117
Rehoboth	43
Redemption	105
Sunshine	12
Shamrock	39
Sharks	87
Science	91
Spooks in Smoke.....	116
The Wanderer's Return.....	7
The Morning Prayer.....	26
The Old Year.....	72
To One I Love.....	84
The Mountain Rose.....	90
The Mesozoic Age.....	119
Whose Voice Is Ever Heard.....	108
Where Santa Seldom Comes.....	31
When Glow-worms Glow.....	67

INTRODUCTORY

Wait not, reader, 'til the angels
Waft the toiler's spirit home;
If you give a wreath to crown him,
Give it ere he reach the tomb.

After death, his wants are ended
And he 'll heed not what is said;
While he lives and labors for thee,
Give him raiment, give him bread.

They who fail to show true friendship
To him while he labors here,
Need not think to make atonement
By much weeping 'round his bier.

Just a word of praise may comfort,
Since it feeds the mind and heart;
But the toiler's needy body
Thrives on no such leaven'd tart.

Of ev'ry virtue love's the soul,
But soul of vice is hate;
Hate loves itself more than the whole;
Love all would consecrate.
Though deeds of vice we sometimes note,
The hand of love this volume wrote.

THE WANDERER'S RETURN

I've travel'd 'round this little globe,
Wherever man existed,
In search of that enchanted spot
Where peace and pleasure trysted,
'Til, weary of my fruitless toil
Through climes where merc'ry freezes,
To old Columbia I 've return'd,
Where ev'ry prospect pleases.

.
Give me back the little cabin
That embower'd used to stand
In a crypt of vines and roses
Planted by my mother's hand;
It is better than a mansion
In city's fairest ward
Where the love of show and fashion
Lures people from the Lord.

Give me back the old log schoolhouse
Where I learn'd my a-b-c;
If its seats were made of puncheons,
They were good enough for me,
Since beside me sat a lassie
In checker'd, homespun dress,
Who would aid me with my lessons—
I lov'd her, I confess.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

But soon she was promoted
To a seat at writing desk—
A long and broader puncheon
Which from use was smoothly drest.
Then my studies grew much harder;
I also long'd to write,
So again to sit beside her
From early morn 'til night.

Our window was an orifice,
And it ran from end to end
'Twixt two logs in that quaint schoolhouse,
Having just the proper bend,
With a little scutch and hewning,
To give sufficient light,
So excuse could not be offer'd
That lines were out of sight.

At that window we would practice
With our goose-quill pens and ink
Made from gallnuts found in summer
Ere the sun had made them shrink.
And our task was done with pleasure;
We knew a time might come
We would want to write a letter
To lovers, or back home.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

There was neither stove nor chimney,
In that schoolhouse long ago,
So I 'll mention how we warm'd it
For I 'm sure you want to know:
On the floor, about in center,
We plac'd a great, flat stone,
And on it we built the fires—
Stoves then were quite unknown.

Our teacher, and big scholars too,
Ne'er deem'd it unbecoming
To fell the dead-top forest trees
For wood to keep fire humming,
While girls would sweep and dust the room,
And pails of water tote;
Then "work as well as play" was taught—
A fact we proudly note.

I still can see the lovely girls
As they play'd at "keeping house"
With broken saucers, cups, and plates
Holding mud pies, cake, and souse;
I see them treat their baby dolls
In a stern, mother's style,
'T was a spank to get them quiet
And change their cry to smile.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

When the days were soft and mellow,
We would play "town ball" or "cat,"
And a game call'd "ante-over"
Which was play'd without a bat.
We sometimes roam'd the wildwood
And waded shallow brooks,
But we always answer'd promptly
When conk shell sounded "Books."

Oh! it makes my heart beat faster
As the thought runs through my brain
That perhaps in the hereafter
I will meet them all again;
Meet again those dear, old playmates,
And girl of homespun dress,
In a mansion up in heaven
Where comes no dire distress.

There the dove of peace extendeth
Its white pinions over all,
And the tree of life is blooming
As it did before the fall;
Sweetest promise Jesus gave us,
Who suffer with him here,
Is a home of peace in heaven
And endless pleasure there.

BE A DOER

'T is a custom handed down
From ancient sage and seer,
To wish success may crown
The subjects of our prayer.

But I will change that rule,
On this bright New Year's Day ;
I 've learn'd in Nature's school
'T is vain to only pray.

Our prayers alone can't feed
Nor clothe the lame and poor.
All right to earnest plead,
But each should be a doer.

SUNSHINE

We've a little girl nam'd Gladys,
Who is sweet as sweet can be;
Her eyes are bright as diamonds,
And her voice is full of glee.
She is sunshine in the household,
And, though she's scarcely three,
She's a boundless source of comfort
To my loving wife and me.

I have seen a few smart babies,
And of many others read,
But there's none can equal Gladys
In the cute things done and said.
There's her little feet so chubby—
Don't you hear them, pat-a-pat,
As she hastens down the stairway
Crying, "Papa, where's you at?"

How my heart doth leap for joy
As she climbs upon my knee,
Putting trusting arms around me,
Saying, "Papa, dis is me;
Does you lub me dood as mamma,
Or as dood as I lubs you?"
Then I hug and kiss her fondly
And say, "Darling, yes, I do."

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

What wonder that the Savior
 Took children on his knee,
And bless'd the little darlings
 In their simplicity!
No other form of teaching
 Could greater love have shown,
Than taking little children
 And treat them as his own.

If we would be like children
 And do as children do,
We'd also go to Jesus
 And get a blessing too;
For he is ever ready
 To take the sinner's part;
Who trustingly goes to him
 For grace and a new heart.

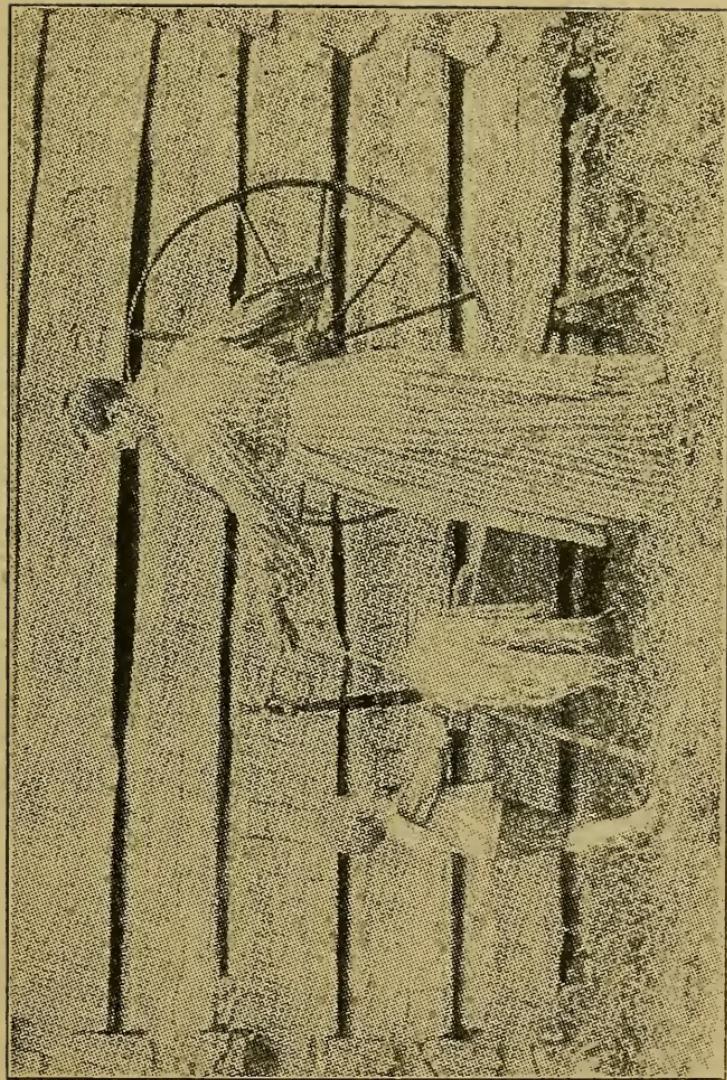
MY MOTHER

Remember I her smiles and tears,
Her fond embrace when acts were right,
And parting kiss at each good-night—
How they would banish all my fears.

I, trusting, hung about her knees
To tell my sorrows in those days,
Knowing her smile and words of praise
Would set my troubled mind at ease.

Dear mother, from thy higher sphere
Look down upon thy wayward child
And keep his thoughts from running wild;
To guard him, be thou ever near.

MY MOTHER



CALEB

Oh, faithful servant, none so true
Or worthy of my trust,
At my command thou wilt pursue,
Then thank me for a crust.

When I was poor and cloth'd in rags,
You lov'd me all the better ;
Your anxious eyes and tail that wags
Were your consoling letter.

And when the meal and cruise of oil
Were gone from out my larder,
And we were hungry, you would toil
And hunt for game the harder.

And if success were your reward,
You would not eat the quarry,
But brought it home to feed your lord,
For whom you felt so sorry.

Should beasts or other foes assail,
You stood by me the closer,
And to protect, you would not fail
To charge when I said, "Go, sir!"

Oh, noble dog, oh, faithful friend,
When thou art persecuted
My voice shall rise to thee defend
Ere you be executed.

CHORISTERS

Awake! oh, torpid muse, awake!
And aid me with some fitting words;
Let me all other themes forsake
While paying tribute to the birds,
Whose merry songs, from year to year,
Bid us dismiss our load of care.

The sparrow, harbinger of spring,
Is first to start the year with song;
His modest chant suggestions bring
That winter will be gone ere long,
When all the air will ring sonorous
With a countless throng in chorus.

The orioles, in month of May,
Come to our lovely eastern clime;
'T were vain to bid them long to stay,
They leave again in autumn time.
Yet while they stay, 't is sweet to hear
Their happy song in cadence clear.

The cardinal, with plume of flame,
Is sympathetic in his song;
He is a prophet—hard to tame—
And when he sings, it won't be long
'Til gathering clouds, it has been found,
Will moisten all the thirsty ground.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

The tanager, with tips of black,
 A visitor from tropic skies,
He shows a crimson breast and back—
 A dazzling beauty when he flies.
His song, so simple and so queer,
Consist of two brief notes—"Chip-cheer!"

The robin redbreast is well known,
 And lov'd wherever he is found;
He emigrates to ev'ry zone,
 And loves to run upon the ground;
He feeds on bugs, worms, and cherries,
And gets drunk on china-berries.

The wood thrush has a speckled breast
 And ringing voice like vesper chimes;
So near the ground, they build their nest
 That eggs and young are lost oftentimes;
Though often robbed of their increase,
Their song is full of love and peace.

The blue jay builds his nest on high
 And drives the hawks and crows away;
He has a topknot and keen eye;
 His song is "Jay-lic-jay-bird-jay."
When foes about his home appear,
His voice a war-note rings out clear.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

The mockingbird 's like men I 've known,
Who sing all songs they ever heard,
A dainty medley, not their own,
But mimic like this little bird.
In vain we look ; we never find
In them originating mind.

The rose-breasted grosbeak, I know,
Is so refin'd in all his tastes
That he prefers alone to go
And music make in desert wastes,
To mixing with the motley throng
Who have no ear for classic song.

The catbird, dress'd in somber hue,
Is noted for his feline voice ;
He is so trusting and so true
That he stays near our homes from choice ;
The trait, in him, we wonder at,
Is his desire to tempt the cat.

Like other rogues, the bobolink
Changes name on changing places ;
His dress he changes, too, we think,
Just to show off airs and graces.
In Southern States he 's ortolan,
But butterbird in Yucatan.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

The yellow-breasted chat, I wot,
Is such a knowing little gloat
That some have nam'd him polyglot,
Because he mimics ev'ry note
That other birds dare try to sing.
Warm summer days his presence bring.

The house-wren is so very small
And busy in his daily life,
He has no time to build at all
A home in which to keep his wife.
He is a naughty little scold,
Yet some declare his actions bold.

The meadow lark, when on the wing,
Shows plumage streaked with polish'd gold ;
When he his sweetest anthems sing,
We vainly try him to behold.
With tireless wing, he soars so high,
His form is lost in azure sky.

The nightingale, of southern lands,
Outrivals all the birds that sing ;
He makes us dream of angel bands
Who to the earth "glad tidings bring."
His music floats on midnight air,
And seems to come from ev'rywhere.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

How lonely are the winter days
When these sweet messengers are gone;
But few of them then with us stays,
None cheer the dreary monotone.
The only solace for our pain
Is, spring will bring them back again.





A BOY'S PHILOSOPHY

NOTHING NEW

I hear men say that it appears
All boys these days are bad,
Much worse than those of other years
When they were but a lad

I 'll, therefore, tell a few bad things
Men of to-day will do;
I 'm sure you 'll say my story rings
Like ev'ry word was true.

I see men loafing on the street,
When on my way to school;
I hear them lie and see them cheat
In games of cards and pool.

I hear them take God's name in vain—
That 's how I learned to swear;
Now tell me which is most to blame,
Just give your verdict fair.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

I see men drink and chew and smoke,
And practice other sin;
They say it is a splendid joke
When "suckers" are rop'd in.

They teach us how to drink and play
In towns they voted dry;
The officers don't care, they say,
But drink too, on the sly.

We boys don't have to visit jails
Or gambling dens *this day*,
To hear men telling vulgar tales
Or learn to cheat at play.

And yet, men have the cheek to say
That boys, these days, are bad,
And know of naughty words to say,
They never learn'd from dad.

The men to many places go
Where boys don't have a chance;
They love to see the vulgar show,
Such as the Salome dance.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

Men fuss and fight o'er politics
When neither side is right;
But if one boy another kicks,
They 'll say, "Ain't that a sight!"

I 've said enough, I think, to show,
The tricks a kid employs
Are but a copy of a few
Men did when they were boys.

So, nothing more I now will add
To things that men will do.
What boys know, they learned from dad;
Hence, no bad things are new.

THE MORNING PRAYER

Father, who in heaven art,
 Let thy love to us be shown ;
Daily feed the hungry heart
 With sweet manna from thy throne.
Give us grace to conquer sin,
 And our debtors to forgive ;
Lead us peaceful paths within,
 And a righteous life to live.
Thus thy name shall honor'd be
 By thy creatures here ; and when
From these bodies we are free,
 Thou shalt praises have. Amen.

DO FLOWERS TALK?

In Tennessee, a lady fair
By chance one day I met;
Her rosy cheeks and nut-brown hair
Dwell in' my mem'ry yet.

To me she gave a lovely flower,
The fairest, I opine,
That grew within her garden bower—
A lovely columbine.

To her I pen this little note,
Expressive of my glee;
'T is not on flowers that I dote,
But smiles she gave to me.

A TWILIGHT SCENE

The crimson clouds and wooded hills,
Reflected on the river deep;
While lullabies a mother trills
To woo her nursing child to sleep:

A flash of wings, athwart the stream,
Made by a fish hawk in its flight:
All this I saw—not in a dream,
But by the sunset's mellow light.

JINGLES AND JOGS

A hoppergrass hopp'd and a katydid did—
 Oh, yes, they did!

A jay bird saw where each of them hid,
And down that jay bird's throat they slid,
 That's what they did.

A tadpole rowed from its rude abode,
 Where eggs were stow'd,
By mamma frog, to be secure
From mouth of frog-egg epicure
 Who that way strode.

Two sparrows spar'd in our back yard
 Upon the sward;
They fought so long and fought so hard,
A tomcat caught them off their guard,
 In our back yard.

A woodpeck peck'd a deep, round hole,
 In an oak pole;
He thought to build his mate a nest
Where she could lay and set and rest;
 That was his goal.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

Some bluebirds came along one day;
I heard them say,
“We'll drive them woodpecks far away,
And in that hole our own eggs lay,
And there we'll stay.”

A corn crow crow'd upon a limb;
I look'd at him;
He took me for a scarecrow grim,
But with my rifle, long and slim,
I silenc'd him.

I saw a sawmill saw saw-logs,
Held fast by dogs;
I heard, as I saw that sawmill saw,
A steam pipe mutter, “Chaw, chaw, chaw,
Here ends these jogs.”

WHERE SANTA SELDOM COMES

Many a little sock, I fear,
Hung by a fireplace,
Old Santa Claus will miss this year
For want of Christian grace.

He is so very miserly
And travels with such haste,
He sees no poor child's misery—
He has no time to waste.

He hastens on his flying steed
Where mammon's wealth is told;
He visits those who have no need,
And gives to young and old.

The poor in alleys and back streets
Old Santa seldom sees;
He rarely visits such retreats
The children there to please.

GLAD TIDINGS

While walking one day through a desolate
wood,
Recounting the times I had fail'd to be good,
And thinking that God would discover each
flaw
And punish my soul for transgressing his Law :
As thus I was musing and walking along,
It seem'd that this message came to me in
song :

[CHORUS]

Now the broken law is mended !
It is whole, it is whole !
'T was the blood of Jesus did it,
For the soul, for the soul.
Go, declare the tidings gladly—
Law's repeal'd ! Law's repeal'd !
By the sacrifice of Jesus,
All are seal'd, all are seal'd !

'T was only the notes of a little, brown bird,
Yet music more cheering I never had heard ;
The sweet revelation brought love, peace, and
joy,

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

And hope for the future, unmixed with alloy.
A light, out of darkness, seem'd 'round me to
fall,
When that voice as from heaven said, "Christ
paid it all!"

[CHORUS]

Now the broken law is mended!
It is whole, it is whole!
'T was the blood of Jesus did it,
For the soul, for the soul.
Go, declare the tidings gladly—
Law's repeal'd! Law's repeal'd!
By the sacrifice of Jesus,
All are seal'd, all are seal'd!

A SENSIBLE BEE

Thus spake a little honeybee:
“I’m never on the bum;
I sip each flower that I see,
But never sip at rum.

“A yellow jacket, with his dress
That shines like purest gold,
Will dally ’round a cider press,
Where vulgar tales are told;

“And sometimes may convince a bee
That honey there is found,
But if one ventures there to see,
It soon is drunk and drown’d.”

Let us a lesson learn from bees,
And shun the danger zone;
All drunkenness is a disease,
For which men must atone.

ENGLISH SPARROWS

As I sit beside the casement
Of my window, I can see,
In an ivy-covered tree,
Sights that fill me with amazement.

There a colony of sparrows
Have establish'd their abode
In a socialistic mode,
With its pleasures and its sorrows.

Their business is to multiply ;
Unlike the Utah Mormon,
They hold all things in common,
Yet virtue's rules they strict apply.

The hens look modest and dapper
As they sit upon a limb
And their feathers smoothly trim,
While the cocks for favor chaffer.

Cocks chatter and fight each other,
They fly away to obtain
For her a morsel of grain,
Each trying to be best lover.

MUSICAL MAGGIE

Stranger, listen to the story
 Of this fair Kentucky maid,
Known to us as charming Maggie,
 For the music she has play'd.
In her chin there is a dimple,
 And a twinkle in her eye;
These, combined with rhythmic motion,
 Make our thoughts to soar on high.

Oh, the magic of such music!
 How it makes the welkin ring,
And awakes long-dormant feelings
 In our soul to hear her sing!
When her nimble finger touches
 The guitar's responsive string,
Angels drop their harps in wonder
 And to her rich trophies bring.

FORGIVEN

You naughty Snow Ball, come right here,
This switch I must apply, I fear.
You 've chew'd the buttons off my shoes,
And torn to shreds the Evening News.

Will you be good?

See, you 've upset the baby's milk,
And spill'd it on my finest silk ;
How naughty to commit such crime !
If I will let you off this time,

Will you be good?

* * *

Come to my arms, you precious pet,
With all thy faults, I love thee yet ;
Come, let us kiss and make it up,
For you are such a cunning pup.

You will be good.

The cobbler, he can mend my shoes,
And I had read the Evening News ;
I 'll send and buy more baby milk,
And wash and press my dainty silk —

You are so good !

MY MOTHER'S PRAYER

I open'd the door of mother's boudoir
And saw her upon her knees;
She earnestly utter'd these words in prayer:
 "Oh, Father, in mercy, please
Protect my boy from Satan's snare!
Behold, I place him in thy care."

I silently closed the door, in fear,
And quietly stole away;
But the earnest words of my mother's prayer
 That fell from her lips that day,
Now make me feel I'm in God's care
And safe from ev'ry hidden snare.

By faith, I can see her still on her knees,
Though now she has climb'd the stair
That leads to a home of heavenly ease,
 Whose portals are reach'd by prayer;
Mother will plead with God up there,
To guard her boy 'gainst Satan's snare.

SHAMROCK

The golden harp again we bring,
On this Saint Patrick's day ;
Though old the theme, the song we sing
We'll put in this new way.

God bless our sons for Jesus' sake,
Where'er they chance to roam ;
May they a sprig of shamrock take,
And kiss the Blarney Stone.

God bless our lovely daughters, too,
Who dwell in foreign lands ;
And may they ever keep in view
For what the Shamrock stands.

If hearts are tender, lips as sweet,
As those who stay at home,
They'll learn in youth to be discreet
Without the Blarney Stone.

GIRLS OF OTHER DAYS

My mind wanders back to the primitive days,
When women were strangers to corsets and .
stays,
And none of them thought of a hair-dresser's
store,
For switches and rats no true lady then wore.

Their hair was the kind that nature supplied,
And rouge and cosmetics they never applied ;
Let hobble-skirt dresses and wads of false hair
Make sensible ladies of fashion beware.

The open-work stocking and shoe with high
heel
To men of good judgment can never appeal ;
But worst of all fashions the devil begat,
Is killing the birds to get plumes for her hat.

Just give us the lady with figure her own,
Untrammel'd by fashions like those we have
shown.

Away with all fashions, despoilers of ease !
Be simply true women, if men you would
please.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Just one more day 'til Christmas ;
And the shops are full of toys,
And the girls are on the qui vive,
Buying presents for the boys ;
And the boys are, also, looking
For some trophies for the girls,
Such as rings, and pins, and bracelets,
Set with diamonds or with pearls.

Little children are expecting
Visits from Old Santa Claus,
With his mammoth load of sundries
That a team of reindeer draws,
Such as cakes, and nuts, and candies,
Relish'd by both girls and boys,
And, oh, so many other things
That he knows a child enjoys.

He has dolls with lovely features
For the big and little girls,
Some clad like mythic Venuses,
With just atmosphere and curls ;
While others mimic modesty
With the finest lingerie,
To conceal their sawdust bodies
'Neath a veil of mystery.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

He has aëroplanes and biplanes
And some automobiles too,
But they are for the girls and boys
Who know what and when to do.
Yes, he has a vast assortment
Of most useful things to wear,
And it took a million agents
A whole year to all prepare.

He is coming here at Christmas
Just as sure as sure can be ;
They will see him first in Lapland,
Then he 'll sail across the sea,
And will visit all the country
From Beersheba unto Dan ;
He delights to please the children,
For his home is Isle of Man.

Ev'ry house where Christ is reigning
In the hearts of parents dear,
Will be watching, during Christmas,
For old Santa to appear ;
If you know some orphan children
In the country or in town,
Go and share your presents with them.
Never turn poor orphans down.

REHOBOTH

To Rehoboth we took a stroll,
That city of the dead;
The monuments there thickly stood,
And seemingly they said:
“Peace, peace, a perfect, blissful peace
Comes here to us and ours;
Since Jesus broke the bands of death,
We no more dread its powers.

“We gladly laid the burdens down
That duty bade us bear,
And took the robes of righteousness
Christ gave for us to wear.
Should naught remain to mark the spot
Where sleeps our senseless clay,
With forms of beauty we will rise,
On resurrection day.”

FORAGERS

The rabbit leaps, but owl, it flies;
Both roam by night 'neath starry skies,
Since light affects their open eyes;

When days are bright they sit and think,
But seldom use their eyes to wink.

The eagle has the keenest eye,
He sights his prey from perch on high,
And rears his young in an aëri;

He feeds by day and sleeps at night,
Oft cleaves a cloud to reach the light.

A hawk has strong and hooked beak,
His eyes are keen, and form unique;
He oft gives out a loud, shrill shriek;
From ev'ry foe that might molest,
He seeks to hide his strong-built nest.

The squirrels live among the trees;
Like acrobats on a trapeze,
They leap from branch to branch with ease;
They use the hollow of a tree
For winter store and nursery.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

The raccoon roams about by night,
Returning home ere it is light; •
If overtaken, he will fight;
It takes a dog with stubborn will
A full-grown 'coon to catch and kill.

The minks, the beavers, and polecats,
Like otters, civets, and muskrats,
Are slain for fur to make fine hats
And other comforts ladies fair
In winter times are wont to wear.

The 'possum Taft and Teddy bear
Are seldom seen now anywhere;
They seem to keep within their lair;
While Bryan mules, renown'd for kicks,
Are now the emblematic tricks.

MODERN METHODS

We want to build a new church;
The old one is too small;
Besides, it's antiquated,
It has no banquet hall.

We'll put our heads together,
With shoulders to the wheel,
And in the name of Zion
For ample means appeal.

We'll need some fine glass windows,
With pictures for the wall;
But these our wealthy brothers
Will willingly install,

If we will let the donors
The names therein inscribe
Of some departed lov'd ones
Who recently have died.

Then, too, some wealthy widow,
Whose husband fell asleep,
Will want to give a panel
His memory to keep,

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

And in it place a token
More lasting than a tear,
His age and death engraven
Upon an empty chair.

The Sunday school will help us
With nickels and with dimes,
And sisters will set dinners
With cake and cream side-lines.

We thus will reach the masses
And make them give a part,
By filling first the stomach
We 'll warm the icy heart.

We 'll give some entertainments
And run a grand bazaar;
We 'll show a solid phalanx
Like soldiers march to war.

We 'll set, for all those giving
Above a certain poll,
In cryptograph a tablet,
And call it "Honor Roll."

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

Perhaps some sister churches
Whose debts have long been paid,
Will for the sake of Jesus
Give us a little aid.

But home and foreign missions,
If need be, we 'll side-track,
And use up all collections
'Til nothing more we lack.



GLIMPsing THE FUTURE

When future crops are needing rain
To wet the thirsty-ground,
Some aéronaut will mount his plane
And tow a cloud around.

But if a picnic people plan
And need a brighter day,
They 'll get this new-styled weather-man
To tow the clouds away.

JOHN SEVIER

Ere Tennessee was given name
Or white man dared assert a claim,
A hero, named John Sevier,
Was wont to chase the elk and deer
Upon her wooded hills and plains;
And, tho' exposed to snows and rains,
He and companions set about
The task to drive the Red Men out;
So when the Red Men would appear,
He'd say, "Come on, boys, they are here."

One day, while Robertson and he
Were seated 'neath a giant tree
Consulting how they might ascend
To top of hill in river bend,
His comrade made a sudden leap
And through the jungle 'gan to peep;
Then backward stepped with cautious tread
And to our hero softly said,
"I wot not what their numbers be,
But this I know, that ten I see."

Our hero, then, brave Sevier,
Said, "We 'll stand firm and never fear."
They took good aim, then with a yell
They on the others quickly fell
With hunting knives ; and so they slew
The eight remaining, two by two.
To keep that deed in memory,
They call'd the country "Ten-i-see."
Just why we do not spell it so,
Is something no one seems to know.

From records kept, we have been taught,
Of all the battles that he fought,
That he in each a vict'ry won,
The Reds retreating with the sun,
'Til all the State of Tennessee
Was from the fear of Red Men free.
His battles numbered thirty-five,
Through which if Indians did survive,
Whene'er the rascals would appear,
He 'd say, "Come on, boys, they are here.'

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

Along the River Tellico,
A white man could in safety go,
As all the mountain tribes were friends,
'Til dastard Whites that friendship ends ;
Then they became a dreaded foe
That threaten'd ev'ry bungalow ;
But Sevier a treaty made
And for a time their wrath was stay'd ;
Still soon it kindled up again,
And many Whites by them were slain.

The Chickamauga's bandit band
Was known and fear'd in all the land ;
They were composed of Cherokees
Combin'd with Creeks and brave Shawnees.
They invaded ev'ry station,
Leaving naught but desolation ;
Their home was near a mountain cave,
Where they would flee their scalps to save.
Protected thus, they lost all fear,
And bolder grew from year to year.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

But Sevier a way soon plann'd
By which to crush that bandit band;
He call'd a few brave-hearted men
And built a fleet right there and then.
Each ship was but a light canoe,
But it could safely carry two;
They pushed out boldly from the shore,
With Shelby as their commodore
And Sevier as admiral,
Who kept a keen eye over all.

The distance from the starting quay
To where the sought-for quarry lay,
Seem'd great to them, as day by day
They toil'd in silence on the way;
But, hold! now see the smoke arise
From wigwams where the quarry lies
Unmindful of the dreadful doom
That soon must all their joy consume;
For what remain alive will be
Reduced to abject poverty.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

This daring deed, as we are taught,
Was by our hero plann'd and wrought;
And from the spoils he took that day,
He could a hundred thousand pay.
So perfect had he form'd his plan,
He never lost a single man.
His transports, tho', were now set free
To go gyrating to the sea.
Where this occurred, the records say,
Our Chattanooga stands to-day.

The British and the Red Men too
Receiv'd from him their Waterloo.
King's Mountain, strongly fortified
By British, was their hope and pride;
Cornwallis was an English peer
Who said he had nor doubt nor fear
But that his army, train'd to fight,
Could all the rebels put to flight;
He counted not the strength of those
Whose liberties he would oppose.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

The morrow's sun had scarcely shone
Before some foes he had not known
Were climbing up the mountain-side
To humble all that dotard's pride ;
At head of whom John Sevier,
More brave than any English peer,
Was leading on, with dauntless tread,
Regardless of the rain of lead ;
He, with a voice shrill and clear,
Would shout, "Come on, boys, they are here."

In all the long and bloody war,
That battle shone as brightest star ;
It gave impetus to the cause
Of freedom from oppressive laws ;
It caused each war-depleted band
To draw the sword with firmer hand ;
It gave the crown of liberty
Its brightest gem of chivalry ;
It won the laurel branch of fame,
And left the British naught but shame.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

It set the exil'd Mitchell free,
Whose home was in Tuck-a-lee-chee,
A cove hemmed in by mountains high
With peaks that seem to pierce the sky.
The cause for which he exiled came,
Is still a cause for British shame ;
And 'til she sets the Irish free,
There will be many more like he
To damn her rule of tyranny
And strike a blow for liberty.

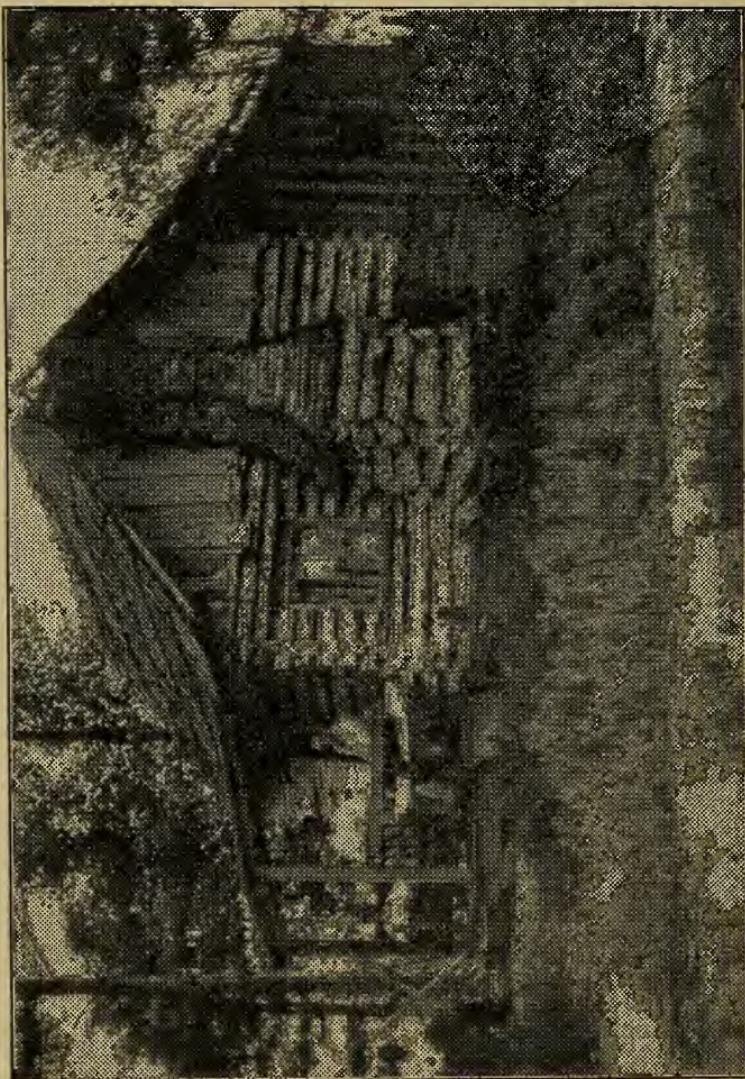
Soon Tennessee was made a State
And to the Union link'd her fate ;
Six times our hero, John Sevier,
Was chosen as the Governor ;
Three times to Congress he was sent,
Her people there to represent.
No duty did he ever shirk ;
If difficult, more hard he 'd work ;
Through all his life he bravely stood
For what he deem'd the people's good.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

His noble deeds aroused the hate
Of some who fear'd to emulate,
And so we find that he, alas!
Was persecuted by that class;
They treason charged and him berated
And all his chattels confiscated;
But time, the righter of all wrongs,
Has given praise where it belongs;
And hence his statue and his name
Are chosen for the Hall of Fame.



THE HOME OF DINAH



MOSE AND DINAH

Upon a line of railroad
In "Reconstructed South,"
We saw some pickaninnies
With shining eyes and mouth,
Who climb'd upon the fences
To view each passing train,
On hearing whistles blowing
"The crossing-signal strain."

This is no fancy picture,
But scene from real life,
Resulting from the freedom
Of Moses Chinn and wife,
Whose hearts were pierc'd by Cupid
When both were very young
And in their youthful ardor,
Confess'd it with the tongue.

Lon Chinn and Thomas Haistings
Were neighbors " 'fore de Wah";
Each had a negro servant,
From whom the facts we draw;
Miss Dinah cook'd for Haistings,
And Moses drove for Chinn;
So, in the Haistings cabin
The story will begin.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

They had a fancy wedding,
 Just like some white folks do,
Each vowing their affection
 If tried would be found true;
They said no kind of trouble
 Should ever intervene
To break the cord that bound them,
 That day, by Parson Green.

Love lasted for a season,
 With naught to mar their peace,
'Til Lincoln's proclamation
 Made chattel slav'ry cease;
And Moses join'd the army,
 While Dinah stay'd at home,
Supporting self and baby,
 Which soon thereafter come.

Miss Haistings wrote the letter
 Which broke the news to Mose,
Who sent his wife five dollars
 To buy the baby clothes,
And said that he was sorry
 He could not send her more,
Since when he bet on sixes,
 The dice came tripple-four.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

He saw the game was honest,
And yet he thought it strange
That when he chang'd his number,
The dice would also change.
Thus, all his monthly wages
And bounty, too, was spent;
So Dinah and the baby
Ne'er got another cent.

Still, when the war was over
And he was muster'd out,
Of roads that led to Dinah
He took the shortest route;
And soon he got more money
In check for some back pay,
With which he aided Dinah
To start a "Grand Cafe."

He there became "star boarder"
To drink and smoke cigars,
While Dinah did the cooking
And Stella watch'd the cars;
Until there came another,
Which was a daughter too;
Then Moses said to Dinah,
"Dis heah won't nebber do.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

“Yo’ nex’ mus’ be a boy—
Doan’ nebber say yo’ can’t;
I wants a li’le sojer
To weah de name ob Grant;
For he was bestes’ gen’ral
De worl’ hab ebber see,
He wallop’d all dem Rebels
And capter’d dat man Lee.”

As if to suit his fancy,
The next one was a boy;
Mose got on a roaring drunk
To show the world his joy.
Ere another year was past,
Behold, another boy!
Moses nam’d it “Lincum,”
But Dinah call’d it “Roy.”

Indolence and fine cigars
Made Mose’s wealth soon go,
Yet he still would drink his booze
While table fare ran low;
Boarders dropp’d off one by one
And the cause would mention;
Moses saw his game was up,
So he sought a pension.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

Pension sharks were thick as bugs,
Who for a little fee
Furnish'd all the witnesses
To swear to Mose's plea;
Some, to honor being lost,
For pensions will apply,
Knowing well their proven claim
Is ev'ry whit a lie.

Claims, though fil'd in "legal form,"
Must always take their turn;
But Mose's claim was soon allow'd,
Then he had wealth to burn,
Or "the tiger" buck again
In all the gambling dens;
So he left his wife and home
For such degraded friends.

Mose is on the pension roll
Along with honest men,
Worthless to both home and State,
Fit subject for "the Pen."
Dinah does the best she can
To keep "the wolf" away;
She washes for folks in town
And takes old clothes for pay.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought



WATCHING FOR MOSE

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

Eager children watch each train,
Whene'er the whistle blows,
Thinking Mose will come again
And bring them food and clothes.
Hope like that is truly vain,
For Mose will never come;
Love and honor he let go,
The day he took to rum.

Dinah speaks of slav'ry now
As brightest days she 's had;
Life, she says, was free from care,
'Til rum made Moses bad;
'Dat freedom made him triflin',
Sence he don' fear de lash;
Goodness all am gone from 'im,
He 's wuss 'n po' white trash.

"He sots aroun' dem bar rooms
Wif polertishum chaps;
He trades 'ims vote for whiskey
An' libs on free-lunch scraps.
Doan' talk to me 'bout slab'ry,
Jes' sabe yo' preshus breaf;
If white fokes did sell niggers,
Doan' niggers sell dar se'f?

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

"De white fokes keep good niggers,
Dey only sell de scrub;
W'en I was wif Marse Haistings,
I had good close an' grub.
I wisht some fren' ob niggers
Had cut dat Lincum's froat,
Befo' dat proclaimashum
Him's deb'lish han's had wrote."

Thus wail'd deserted Dinah
About her present plight,
While parching corn for supper
One cold Thanksgiving night;
With health and spirit broken
For want of better food,
None but a blind fanatic
Dare say her words were rude.

Some Moses still are drawing
A hero's sinecure;
Such blot on roll of honor
No patriot should endure.
Clean up the army records,
Or else begin anew;
Let Dinahs draw the pensions
When Moses prove untrue.

WHEN GLOWWORMS GLOW

Silent creeps o'er western hills
The sable pall of night;
Screech owls answer whip-poor-wills
As slowly fades the light.

The west winds murmur thro' the pines
A dirge for dying day,
And other worlds like star-dust shine
In orbits far away.

While falling dew each leaflet damps
And zephyrs softly blow,
The fireflies light their oilless lamps
And glowworms 'gin to glow.

ORTHOGRAPHICAL FREAKS

My sister Kate is busy,
She has no time for play;
Her time not spent in sewing
She uses to crochet;
But Tom and Sue and Nancy
Will spend the longest day
Just knocking balls with mallets
In game they call croquet.

Now, Tom 's my oldest brother,
And true as e'er they get,
While Sue is but a cousin,
A gay and fair coquette;
And Nancy is my sister,
The youngest and the pet;
A critic in such matters
Would call her a brunette.

We have another cousin,
A youth quite heavy-set,
Who sometimes plays with Nancy;
His name is Dejournette;
His head is white as cotton
From fright he got one day
At witnessing a train wreck
In front of his café.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

Tom owns a horse and buggy
And auto-wagonette,
But makes himself obnoxious
For want of etiquette.
He 'll take the girls out riding,
In weather cold and wet,
And sit beside them smoking
A pipe or cigarette.

One night, I saw him visit
A comic opera,
And buy a stage-box ticket,
Then sit in the parquet;
The feelings that came o'er me
I never shall forget,
When Tom gave as his reason,
He lov'd the gay soubrette.

He left his home and kindred
To skip with her away
From town to town and city
Like shots that ricochet;
Soon Nancy, she got married
And mov'd to Monterey;
Her name is now Dejournette,
She cooks at Tom's café.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

Sister Kate and Cousin Sue,
They both are single yet;
Each of them are waiting for
A prince or baronet;
But if others come along
With minds on wooing set,
Sue or Kate might either make
Some other choices yet.



PRAYER FOR PEACE

While streams flow on to meet the tide
And pleasure craft upon them glide,
May peace of Christ with us abide,
And free from strife all people guide.

GRIEF

Must my future life be wasted
In a fruitless search for peace?
Could the hemlock cup, if tasted,
Give my heart from grief release?
Since thou art gone, no hope is left;
Of all life's pleasure, I'm bereft.

THE OLD YEAR

(Acrostic)

The year just past was full of bane;
Heavy crops were spoil'd by rain;
Earthquakes fill'd our hearts with pain.

Ocean waves engulf'd the land,
Leaving on it barren sand;
Death to all seem'd near at hand.

Years have come and gone before;
Each was fraught with many cares;
And the new one at our door
Raises in us greater fears.

FOR THE NEW YEAR

(Acrostic)

Forgetting ev'ry tear and sigh
Or dart from cruel enemy,
Refresh'd, to do things right we try.

Though many times we've tried in vain
Higher levels to attain,
Each failure bids me try again.

Now I gird my loins anew,
Eager still to catch the view
Where all I see and hear is true..

Yet I feel, the path I tread
Ends where former hopes lie dead ;
And this New Year will begin
Roseate, but end in sin.

OHIO

Ohio! Ohio! Ohio!

A name that my heart ever thrills.
Her mines and her forests of timber
 Give work for her foundries and mills.
Her rivers and streamlets add beauty
 To landscapes of clover and grain;
And stock of all kinds, even poultry,
 Increases each husbandman's gain.

[CHORUS]

Ohio! Ohio! Ohio!

The home of the true and the brave;
When life and its labors are over,
 Give me in thy bosom a grave.

Her sons and her daughters are happy,
 Secure from temptation and care;
They drink of her crystalline water
 Instead of vile whiskey and beer;
When rights of the nation are threaten'd,
 Ohio comes boldly to front
With money and men and munitions,
 To bear in each battle the brunt.

LIFE'S AUTUMN DAYS

I 've pluck'd the ripen'd fruit of life
Where mystic orchards grow;
I woo'd and won a loving wife
Who sleeps beneath the snow.

I 'm on the downward road to-day
Toward the vale of death;
My nut-brown hair has turn'd to gray,
And shorter grows my breath.

The luting of my voice gave way
And it has lost its ring;
I 'm now become but worthless clay
Or harp without a string.

The oil of joy no longer burns
To light my path of life.
To Christ my hopeful spirit turns
For grace to end the strife.

ODE TO THE FOUR WINDS

When north winds blow from fields of snow,
They bring old winter here.

Then frosts abound on grass and ground,
And trees of leaves get bare.

But soft and low the south winds blow
And bring refreshing rain:

The clouds they bring upon their wing
Make many sheaves of grain.

The west wind twines the branching pines
And sough at close of day;
A million stars then, led by Mars,
Peep down from far away.

When east winds howl, an anxious scowl
Is seen on ev'ry face,
For death then claims both men and dames,
To sleep in his embrace.

IF I WERE KING OF PAIN

If I were king of pain, Miss,
 No hope should be in vain;
No Judas should betray with kiss,
All sorrow should give way to bliss,
 For I in love would reign.

If I were king of pain, dear,
 No anguish shouldst thou know,
Nor needst thou shed a briny tear,
For I would banish all thy fear
 And pleasure free bestow.

If I were king of pain, dear,
 No one should trust betray;
For I would guard thee year by year,
And all thy footsteps safely steer
 O'er life's uneven way.

CHRIST THE LIBERATOR

Sin, like a cloud of darkest hue,
Obscured the god of day,
While Jesus pass'd death's water through
To open up a way
Whereby to make the world anew
And quicken mortal clay.

He trod the road all flesh must tread
And died as all must die,
Yet 'rose triumphant from the dead
To reign with God on high ;
Hence we, for whom he groan'd and bled,
Are given liberty.

Shall we not love and praise the name,
Of him who for us died,
Who took upon himself our blame,
Was mock'd, and crucified
Upon a cruel cross of shame
With thieves on either side?

A MORNING IN MAY

The eastern sky is glowing,
While sun is climbing up
To drink the sweeten'd nectar
From Flora's perfume cup.

Each bloom a commune chalice,
Is waiting now for him,
Like many-color'd goblets
With wine fill'd to the brim.

Sweet anthems too are ringing
From many tuneful birds,
Who need not great composers
To furnish them with words.

The linden trees, in forest,
With bees are made to hum,
As eagerly they gather
The honey for their home.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

The lilacs and the poppies
Are drest in royal hue;
More perfect blend of colors
A painter never knew.

The flocks and herds rejoice
To nip the tender grass,
Selecting out their choice
As o'er the fields they pass.

'T is in such fields of Eden
Our God delights to walk
In May day's early morning
And with his creatures talk.

He blesses all the anthems
Of birds and humming bees,
By making food abundant
For them among the trees.

We know that he, in mercy,
Evolv'd a better plan
For those made in his likeness,
Through Christ, the Son of Man.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

MY VALENTINE

My Valentine, my Valentine,
Thy absence makes me sit and pine;
Thou hast my heart—oh, give me thine,
 My Valentine!

Thy lips distill the sweetest wine;
Thine eyes like constellations shine;
I long to call thee wholly mine,
 My Valentine.

Let cords of love our hearts entwine
And each to each all self resign,
And pleasure share from that combine,
 My Valentine.

Thy heart so true and form so fine
Become the altar and the shrine
Whereon I place this heart of mine,
 My Valentine.

Couldst thou repay my love in kind,
Our souls could sip life's richest wine
And feel a thrill of joy divine,
 My Valentine.

But if thou stricter draw the line,
To make my punishment condign,
I still in hope for thee will pine,
 My Valentine.

NEARING PORT

I look with regret o'er my life that is past,
For many mistakes I have made;
As a water-logg'd ship without rudder or mast,
To port I am being convey'd.

The storms I have weather'd when others went
down,
Compel me to wonder the while
Why God, in his wisdom, instead of a frown,
On such a bad sinner could smile.

Yet churches, I notice, with cloud-reaching
spires,
Are wreck'd, while the devil's saloon
Standing near them, deserving hell's hottest
fires,
Passes safe through a raging typhoon.

NO NIGHT IN HEAVEN

When weary of earth, we eager would reach
That goal in the great universe
Where Ebal and Gerizim cease to teach
Each blessing is wed to a curse.

We yearn for that place, that haven of rest;
There toilsome endeavor will cease,
When souls are redeem'd whom devils pos-
sessed,
And bond servants given release.

No shadow of night can enter that home,
No sickness, no sorrow, no death;
The children of Cain forgiven will come
And dwell with the children of Seth.

There God will reveal to angels and men
The depth of his infinite love;
All he created will worship him then
In glorifi'd bodies above.

No opposite sex, no bounding of space,
No giving in marriage up there,
No cloud-cover'd sky, no veil on the face,
No shame-hiding garments to wear.

The glory of God that city will light,
And darkness will vanish away;
All garments will be made spotless and white,
And the time be one endless day.

TO ONE I LOVE

Could I, like famous Hannibal,
A conquering hero be,
I 'd bring my trophies one and all
As a tribute unto thee.

And if I thus could wake a chord
Of love in thy pure heart,
I 'd ask of thee, as my reward,
That we might never part.

Since love for thee gives such delight,
Why ask me to begone?
I 'd rather be with thee to-night
Than occupy a throne.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

A Hoosier boy, by nature blest
With lyric fire to warm his breast
And aid him write the charming verse
That men for ages will rehearse:

Though in a rural district born
And taught in youth to hoe the corn,
His active brain could find no charm
In drudgery upon the farm.

And so he sought another mart
For scenes more cheering to his heart;
But soon, alas! he found that goal
Lay back at "the old swimming-hole."

The greatest pleasure of his life
Was found in wooing for a wife,
A fact we learn when, line by line,
We read "That Old Sweetheart of Mine."

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

The childhood scenes and youthful sports
Were on his stream of life the ports
To which his muse would oft return,
His careful reader soon will learn.

Now Whitcomb Riley's work is o'er,
His hand, in death, can write no more;
We heard him tell his faithful nurse,
"Alas! I've written my last verse."

Still beauty-lovers will prolong
His memory in prose and song;
And 'til the lapse of many ages,
His name will shine among the sages.

No tribute that our pen could write
Can grief at his demise requite,
Nor add new laurel wreaths of fame
To give more luster to his name.

SHARKS

What though the papers try to raise
The cry of better times?

The man who "cost of living" pays,
Finds dollars worth but dimes.

Where once collections could be made
Without the slightest trouble,
The debtors for more time have pray'd
'Til debts just now are double.

Our nation groans beneath the curse
Of foolish legislation,
And times have grown from bad to worse
'Til all seems desolation.

No ray of hope springs in the breast
That times will better be,
While thieves home markets may infest,
And submarines, the sea.

A MODEL HOSTESS

Far up amid the cone-shap'd hills
Along the River Doe,
A town exists with many mills
Run by that river's flow.
A model home one there can find,
'Mid cooling shade of trees,
Where he will get a greeting kind
That makes one feel at ease.

The landlord, in his friendly way,
Knows how to entertain ;
He cheerful keeps from day to day
In spite of age and pain.
His noble wife a hostess prov'd
Who heeds each needful call ;
By all her boarders she is lov'd,
And she in turn loves all.

THE MOUNTAIN ROSE



THE MOUNTAIN ROSE

Not down within the valley,
As many might suppose,
But high upon the mountain
I sought the modest rose,
And found them in profusion,
With petals all a-blush,
Amid the shady forest,
In Autumn's dreamy hush.

Such toxic beauty wasting
Upon the forest wild,
From galaxy of blossoms
Each nature's lovely child,
Made selfish wish come o'er me,
While viewing wasting wealth,
To pluck the fairest blossom
And love it as myself.

I peer'd among the clusters
So perfectly there grown,
Transferr'd one to my bosom,
And now it's all my own.
Still, with unbounded pleasure,
I hold within my hand
The fairest, sweetest blossom
Grown in that forest land.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

SCIENCE

Strict science has her flag unfurl'd
To wave in triumph o'er the world ;
She sits as queen in ev'ry zone,
All nations bow before her throne.

The press and pulpit vainly tried
For years her beacon light to hide ;
But they have since been better taught,
And she is now their "Queen of Thought."

All critics' tongues she soon will stop
Who dare dispute her place on top ;
She will not use a fakir's schemes,
Or deal in visionary dreams.

The broadest gulf her bridge can span,
When aided by the hand of man ;
She tunnels through the mountain high,
Or 'neath the river flowing nigh.

She sends a message wireless
From vessel wreck'd and in distress ;
And, swifter than the railroad train,
She conquers space with aëroplane.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

The man who would in arts prevail,
Must study science for detail ;
If he her perfect laws obey,
All obstacles will then give way.

Men speak of luck and accident
As if God's law for some were meant,
While others, with an equal mind,
The same result could never find.

True science plays no favorites ;
She treats alike all neophytes ;
Though harm may come of act well meant,
Result was law, not accident.



DIVERSITY

Some say all men are equal born,
But that can scarcely be,
For oft we see the fool and wise
Both in same family.

Some men will labor with their hands,
Whilst others plan and think;
Both these are useful in their sphere,
Unless they smoke and drink.

Talk as we will, 't is nature's law,
No two alike shall be;
And so, there is in nature's realm
Endless diversity.

The men who talk and write about
The term "equality,"
Have not the sense to see it tends
To mediocrity.

MOUNTAINS

If on some lofty mountain-peak
My Pegasus could fly,
I unmolested there would seek
My muse to gratify.

There I could take a quiet view
Of hills and vales below,
And see the streamlets winding through
As to the sea they flow.

Such silver threads thro' purpling woods,
Like paths by angels trod,
Would lure my soul to happy moods
And firmer trust in God.

The truest teachers I can find
Are mountains, vales, and brooks,
Since they proclaim a Master Mind,
Yet write no doubtful books.

Astronomers, with telescope,
May sweep the starry heavens
In vain for better ground of hope
Than mountains us have given.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

The students of geology,
Who records read in stone,
Gain knowledge; while theology
Is based on faith alone.

The botanist can see the trees
Lift up their hands in prayer,
While flower censers, swung by breeze,
Shed fragrance ev'rywhere.

Men vers'd in ornithology
See angel forms in birds,
And students of mythology
Tell of great centaur herds.

We learn from these why men of brains
Still preach on lakes of fire,
Where souls must suffer ceaseless pains
To make them God admire.

PENITENCE

Poor Judas, in his anguish,
Gave back the price of blood,
And thereby made confession
That Jesus was the Lord.

And when he saw that Jesus,
His friend, was crucified,
He offer'd, as atonement,
His life, and also died.

He knew the law of Moses
Demanded eye for eye,
And thought an equal off'ring
Would with that law comply.

He ask'd no court or council
His act to justify ;
His sense of honor made him
Prefer with Christ to die.

Will not the tender Jesus,
Who saved a dying thief,
Have mercy on a Judas
Who hang'd himself for grief?

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

If not, the modern priesthood,
Who preach for sordid gold,
Should be accursed with Judas
Who sacred knowledge sold.

What greater faith had Peter,
Or Paul, or Barnabas?
The Lord selected Judas
His death to bring to pass.

What Christian, in his sorrow,
For past or present sin,
Would willing die like Judas,
The Master's grace to win?



BLEEDING HEARTS

A lily was the gift sublime
God gave to Joseph with his spouse
To shed its fragrance through his house
And be a token and a sign
That Mary's Son was love divine;
And hence that flower e'er will be
A sign of love and purity.

But bleeding hearts, that bloom in May,
Should symbolize that mother's grief,
Since he was treated as a thief
And led by cruel hands away
And crucified without delay.
How fitting that we set apart
This flower to symbolize her heart!

May we, for whom that Savior died,
Be led to where his body lay
And see the stone is roll'd away,
And that the crimson, healing tide
Which flow'd from wound made in his side,
Has paid the debt we owe for sin
And made a righteous reign again.

BASEBALL

In the spring, when buds are swelling
And the zephyrs softly blow,
We can hear the people yelling
At the baseball park, you know.

And when summer's heat is hottest,
Making ev'rything aglow,
Of all drotted things the drottest
Is the ball park; still, we go.

And, when autumn paints the landscape
Tints of ev'ry shade and hue,
We will part with friendly handshake,
Thinking "ball talk" then is through.

But, alas! through all the winter,
While the air is full of snow,
Bats are whittled to a splinter,
While the teams on records blow.

PRAYER THAT COUNTS

A soul, for sweet communion,
Should seek a secret bower,
Where vanity nor folly
Can quench the spirit's power.
No mortal there beholding
Will seek to criticise
Thy heart-felt words, when spoken,
Or smile at tear-dimm'd eyes.

Avoid the gilded temples
Whose spires pierce the cloud--
A tempter to the lightning
And to the morbid crowd;
There preachers preach for money,
And choirs sing for pay
To operatic music,
Each song a roundelay.

They advertise attractions
Like, "Madam So-and-so
Will, during offertory,
Produce a grand solo";
Or, "Master Harry Maison
And Clara Dejournette
Will, at this service, render
An extra fine duet."

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

In secret hear God's message,
See visions, as in sleep,
And feel the touch of angels
Whose wings around thee sweep.
Let closet be thy temple,
There worship day by day;
Be not conform'd to fashion,
Do not in public pray.

Thy God, who sees in secret,
Himself will thee reward,
So hypocrites can notice
Thou hast been with the Lord;
Make bare thy heart to Jesus,
And he will hear thy cry,
And in thy hours of trial
All needful strength supply.

BABYLON

I started out, one pleasant day,
To view the city of the dead,
And met, at Fifth Street and Broadway,
An aged man, to whom I said,
“Please tell me, sir, the reason why
So many churches here are nigh.”

“The story is too long, I fear,
For me at present to repeat;
But if an outline thou wouldest hear,
Upon these steps just take a seat;
And I, in few words, will relate
The cause. You see, they number eight.”

We took a seat, when he began,
In words quite solemn and sedate:
“That frame is call’d the Lutheran;
This one might be term’d its mate;
One uses German dialect,
The other English quite correct.

“The one you see down in the plat
Is known as the Episcopal;
Their priests wear miters for a hat,
And don a surplice over all.
Their litany is all a form,
And hence they never rant or storm.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

“Three others, that from here you see,
Are known as Presbyterian;
On some fine points they can’t agree,
So one prefixes ‘Cumberland.’
The Methodist stands over there
And runs the full width of the square.

“The one you see at Gay and Park
Professes on ‘The Book’ to stand;
But, like the raven from the Ark,
It brings no tidings from the land;
Till all the preachers can agree,
The church must sail a boundless sea.”

He told of others just as bad,
And smiled to see my wond’ring look;
He said, “You see, translators had
No business meddling with that Book;
Still, had they made a *full* translation,
All these would be one congregation.”

I said, “Kind sir, I pray explain,
A charge like that should state its ground;
Can such a holy Book contain
Mistakes our teachers have not found?
Oh, tell me where the errors be;
If thou hast light, enlighten me.”

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

“One sad mistake came in this wise:
 Some firm believers in the law
Made scores of saints apostatize
 And judge men’s faith by what they saw;
Thus faith in Christ was modified
By ‘Rules for Conduct’ James supplied.

“That simple swerving from the truth
 To tighter rules for conduct draw,
Made thoughtful people stand aloof
 And not subscribe to such a law;
For love of Christ is not in meats,
But in the faith of him who eats.”

The stranger rose and said, “Adieu,
 Some time we two will meet again,
When facts this day made known to you
 To all mankind will be made plain.”
I thank’d him for his kindly talk,
And to the graveyard took my walk.

I spent therein three busy hours
 Reading names on monuments;
Some were wreath’d with ferns and flowers,
 Some were ladies, some were gents;
One thing observ’d, I’m proud to tell,
All went to heaven, none to hell.

REDEMPTION

Mourn not, dear friends, nor shed vain tears
When death in sable robe appears
 To take my eager spirit home.
Just fold my hands across my breast
And gently lay me down to rest
 Within the silent tomb.

FLOWERS

Go, search the kingdoms of the globe
And find one dress'd in royal robe,
Whose grace and beauty can outshine
The glory of these friends of mine.

Then if thy search should fruitless prove,
Please blame me not when these I love,
Nor bid me cease the fair to please
With gorgeous garlands form'd of these.

FEAR NOT

If, amid life's lights and shadows,
My frail heart should cease to beat,
Do you think I'd dread the summons
And for longer stay entreat?

If you knew how oft and earnest
I have pray'd that hour to meet,
You would know, instead of bitter,
It was welcome and most sweet.

If you knew the many dangers
I have met upon my way,
You would better know the reason
That I seek not here to stay.

I've a mansion up in heaven
That the Savior has prepared;
It's a gift because he loves me,
And not earn'd as a reward.

LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN

From Lookout Mountain's tow'ring height,
One may behold as grand a sight

As mortal eye hath seen ;
First Chattanooga, at its base,
Whose streets—the eye can clearly trace—
Are long and broad and clean.

For many miles, 'twixt banks of green,
The River Tennessee is seen—

Like silver lace—to flow ;
The monuments of countless dead,
Who for their country fought and bled,
Are seen, far, far below.

Old Chickamauga's battlefield,
Where Southern braves were forc'd to yield,
O'erwhelmed by Yankee foes,
Is plainly seen to outward spread
Beyond the park where Fed'r'al dead
Sleep in their last repose.

WHOSE VOICE IS EVER HEARD

Over the noise of city shops
And echo from the hills,
Is heard a voice that never stops,
A sound that never stills.

It speaks as loud as cannon's roar,
Yet soft as falling dew;
Its waves break down earth's rocky shore,
And build up worlds anew.

Though stern and ceaseless, it is kind
And soft, yet ever strong;
It says to all, "This Master Mind
Makes worlds praise him in song."

When speaks that voice to sinful heart,
The blinded eyes will ope;
Where darkness reign'd, a light will start,
And change despair to hope.

New thoughts and visions will arise
Where error dwelt before;
The truth will triumph over lies,
And sin reign there no more.

A WINTER SCENE IN ALABAMA

The snow fell fast on mountains high,
And earth was white 'neath leaden sky ;
The oaks, the pines, and other trees,
Look'd beautiful in silver frieze.

At eventide the cloud withdrew
And night shut out the wild'ring view,
But morning gave mine eyes a feast
As day-god smil'd on scene from east.

Soon soft winds from the Southland blew,
When off the glorious vision flew,
And down my muse came with a thud,
While good Pegasus roll'd in mud.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

KAISER BILL

Ambition led the German king
A universal war to bring,
In which all nations must engage
To quench the fire of Prussian rage,
Whose cruel minions bravely fight
But now are in a dreadful plight.

France and England both combine
To aid Belgium on western line.
These three will strike a heavy blow
And teach a lesson Bill should know,
That "He who causeless draws the sword,
Must die, and be by none deplo'rd."

Russia now is far more sure
To civil government secure,
Since Nicholas and all his train
Have been depriv'd of further reign,
And now in prison must abide
Like those they bound but never tried.

Brave Montenegro, Greece, and Serb,
Will Austrians and Turks disturb;
They, on the line 'mid mountains high,
Conspire to needful links supply,
In chain of troops, that soon will be
Drawn 'round each cruel enemy.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

Next on the line we gladly see
The dauntless troops of Italy ;
And if the Kaiser can't explain,
These will be join'd by troops of Spain.
Then Argentina and Brazil
Must war declare 'gainst Kaiser Bill.

Our Uncle Sam, "The Man of Peace,"
Will all his dogs of war release
Against Bill's submarine blockade,
Which threatens all our ocean trade.
We 'll teach old Bill some Yankee tricks,
When we sail in with our "big sticks."

Let Cuba, China, and Japan
Strike blow for blow where'er they can,
And soon we 'll see the Prussian lords
Like old King Saul fall on their swords.
And then all governments can move
In peaceful channels, rul'd by love.

PERENNIAL YOUTH

In childhood and youth, time drags in its flight

And seemingly never will pass;

Each day is so long, from morning 'til night

We fain would rush sands thro' the glass.

If life is well spent, and its story well told,

We 'll enter a land where they never grow old.

That beautiful land where they never grow old

Is known as the "sweet by and by."

It's a jasper-wall'd city with streets of pure gold;

We pass through its gates when we die.

There 's a home for the soul in that region of light

Where shadows of sorrow our hopes never blight.

That land with its valleys of emerald sheen

Is plac'd far up in the sky;

When mirag'd by faith, its fair border is seen

And realization seems nigh.

All those who were purchas'd shall enter that fold

Where time is forgotten and nothing grows old.

PILOT OF MY SOUL

Oh, God, be thou the Pilot
To guide my wave-toss'd soul,
Which now is near the breakers
Of its eternal goal.

The harbor lights and buoys
That mark'd the channel's course,
Have been made too uncertain
By Satan's subtle force.

When I attempt to follow
The way those lights now lead,
I find my vessel grinding
Upon the shoals of greed.

Old Satan sore beset me
When I was leaving port;
His servants would not let me
In naked freedom sport.

They bound my tender body
In fashion's latest style,
Which made me cross and fretful
And cry instead of smile.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

And then, to cap the climax,
His servants charg'd a fee
And claim'd a lot of credit
For what Thou didst for me.

The tax upon my rigging
The cost of hull outweighs;
'T were better that my vessel
Had perish'd on the ways.

But since it sails life's ocean
Beset by dangers dire,
It fain would reach Thy harbor,
Blest haven of desire.

So be thou, God, my pilot
And steer me safely through
All dangers that would wreck me.
I know that Thou art true.

LIFE'S VINTAGE

To the ripen'd fruit of autumn
Now my vine of life has come,
And I'm waiting for the Master
To transport its vintage home.

But I see among the clusters
As they hang upon the vine,
Many undeveloped berries
Not desirable for wine.

If the Master bid his servants
Glean the good fruit from the bad,
Will they do the work with pleasure
If they see it makes me sad?

If a few, upon each cluster,
Are by mildew made unsound,
Won't they hasten fermentation
And a better wine be found?

SPOOKS IN SMOKE

I sat by the fire, one cold winter night,
And dreamily smok'd a briar-root pipe;
As upward the smoke ascended thro' light,
In it was reveal'd the sorrowful plight
Of one who had eaten love's apples unripe.

The beautiful faces of mother and child,
Reveal'd in that curling blue smoke as it rose,
Were the pictures of those my passion defil'd
When I, unguarded, let lust run wild
And door of the temple of innocence close.

And then, as I sat and thought of her charms,
My conscience from slumber to pity awoke,
And show'd me the girl with babe in her arms
Which all of my claim to honor disarms,
While she seem'd lovely as ever, in smoke.

Like all of her kind, whose sins are reveal'd,
This darling, in silence, must suffer alone;
Though oft that picture to me has appeal'd,
The fact from her I have always conceal'd,
Yet equally suffer, our sin to atone.

Cast down, dejected, forsaken by friends,
Yet true to the innocent cause of her grief,
I see her again in smoke that ascends,
As bone of my bone she patient attends.—
How base must I be, to deny her relief!

POSTALITIS

The strangest fad the world has had
Since reign of 'pendicitis,
Now comes by mail on stage and rail ;
We've named it postalitis.
For it was bred, it has been said,
By trav'lers with a mania
To send back home a view of some
Quaint scene in old Germania.
And it has spread from head to head
'Til now it all the craze is,
And it afflicts with senseless tricks
Of many, many phases.

The germ oft lurks in city clerks,
Whence it spreads to the country,
Where pretty girls, with bangs and curls,
Must bear with the effront'ry
Of such vain dudes, whose card includes
The germ of postalitis ;
But soon they learn to yearn and yearn
For him who so polite is ;
So when he calls, he finds the walls
All pitted with carditis ;
Then, if he please, her form he 'll squeeze,
For he her whole delight is.

Sparks from the Anvil of Thought

And in her room, if he should come—
 This is no fancy fable—
Another lot he 'll find she 's got
 In albums on the table ;
In ev'ry nook he 'll chance to look,
 A mix'd-up mess the sight is ;
So it is clear that all the year
 She suffers with carditis ;
And if she wed that brainless head,
 A cure is not effected,
They 'll both begin to flood their kin
 With cards that are infected.

'T is thus this dread disease is spread ;
 The mail-sack now a sight is ;
Each coming train adds to the strain
 Produced by the carditis.
Some people swear and pull their hair
 'Til head and face a sight is,
And all because the postal laws
 Don't quarantine carditis.
From day to day, I hear men say,
 "In vain my heart contrite is ;
With joy I hail all proper mail,
 But dash this postalitis!"

THE MESOZOIC AGE

This is the Mesozoic age,
In which much reptile venom flows
To make the world in war engage
And gloat upon each others woes.

Before our wondering gaze appears
Thy unmask'd face, Melpomene;
Instead of ink, must widows' tears
Be used to write the tragedy.

All nations rush, at thy command,
In effort to their brothers slay;
Rapine and carnage fill the land
At thy behest, Melpomene.

FOR THE CRITICS

To him within whose brain is wrought
The pleasure born of purer thought,
This aged bard would gladly yield
The crown, the sceptre, and the shield.

For should we drink Castalia dry
To cure our muse of leprosy,
Or dip our pen in Hippocrene,
Some critic still would cry, "Unclean!"

Though rhyme and meter both be fine
And truth pervade each verse and line
Dispelling darkness with its light,
Condemning wrong and praising right:

Some critics still might be so bold
As to entwine such threads of gold
With tinsel made of worthless brass
By placing him in A.B.'s class.

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